



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

1 KINGS 1-11 &
1 CHRONICLES

Week 3

Judgment Day!

1 Kings 11:14-43

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever made a mistake that came back to haunt you?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Who was Hadad (vs. 14-22)? What role was he to play in Solomon's life?
2. What direction is Damascus from Jerusalem (vs. 23-25)? These verses indicate that the minor rebellions against Solomon were becoming major. He was being actively threatened on all sides.
3. Who was Jeroboam (vs. 26-28)? How would God use Jeroboam to punish the dynasty of David for Solomon's sins (vs. 29-33)?
4. Would the royal house of David still remain (vs. 34-36)? Why? What offer did the prophet make to Jeroboam (vs. 37-40)?
5. What was the name of Solomon's son who succeeded him in Jerusalem (vs. 41-44)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Solomon's reign was a time of great accomplishment. Yet he is a case history illustrating the New Testament teaching that people must relate to God through the heart, not through external deeds or behavior. How does Ephesians 2:8 speak to this issue?
2. Great characters sometimes have great flaws. Is this a good summary of Solomon's reign? Have you seen similar case histories in your own experience?
3. If you could have had an interview with Solomon what would you have asked him? How would you have prepared for the interview?

WINDOW
on the Word

The **supporting terraces** in verse 27 are described in other translations as "**the Millo**," from the Hebrew word *male*, meaning "to be full" or "to fill." The City of David and the Temple Mount were on different elevations. Archaeologists have found evidences of an artificial fill to connect a depression between the mountain on which the Temple stood and the king's palace, the City of David. This was done to provide terraces to support buildings, as well as to fortify the city.

Introduction to 1 Chronicles

Authorship: The author is unknown. However, because there is an almost exact overlap between the end of the second book of Chronicles and the opening of the book of Ezra (2Ch 36:22-23; Ezr 1:1-3), it is widely held that the anonymous Chronicler also wrote Ezra and Nehemiah. For this reason Jewish tradition sometimes cites Ezra as the primary author since he did his work after the Exile to Babylon (c. 586-515 B.C.) and during the first return of exiles back to Jerusalem, after 539 B.C.

Date: The list of descendants of Jeconiah extends six generations from the Babylonian captivity (1Ch 3:17-24). That would take us to about 400 B.C. for the earliest date Chronicles could have been finished. That is why some favor a date between 400-350 B.C for the two books of Chronicles, prior to the end of the Persian Empire in 331 B.C. The Persian Empire granted the Jews a period of relative calm and security when a history such as this could be written.

Setting and purpose: The audience to which the Chronicler is writing is the little Jewish community that had settled in Palestine after the Babylonian captivity. The Chronicler wanted to help them remember their history. 1 Chronicles covers a tremendous sweep of historical material from Adam to the death of David. The focus is on the monarchy and the Temple. 1 and 2 Chronicles cover the Israelite monarchy from King Saul (c. 1050 B.C.) to King Zedekiah (c. 600 B.C.). The focus of 1 Chronicles is King David. His story begins in 1 Chronicles 11 and ends with his death in 1 Chronicles 28. David is one of the primary role models the Chronicler sets before his people. This is probably why David's adultery with Bathsheba is not mentioned.

While the Chronicler uses the books of Samuel and Kings as a source, 1 Chronicles is not just a rehash of these earlier books. It gives us "salvation history"—history with a particular theological purpose in mind. Even though the returning Jews had a rebuilt Temple and a priestly line, they had no king. But that did not mean God was not with them. The Davidic Promise still held.

One day someone would arrive to fill that role. Christians believe that Jesus Christ, the son of David, was the fulfillment of the dynastic promises to David. Chronicles shows that the Israelites had a great history and that they had a great future.

Distinctive features: The Holy City, the royal line of David and the sacred Temple for which he prepares lavishly are presented in almost idealized form in 1 Chronicles. While 1 Kings focuses on the central role of kings and prophets, the Chronicler stresses the priesthood and religion. The political emphasis of 1 Kings gives way to the organization of proper worship in 1 Chronicles. While 2 Kings moves toward the tragic climax of the end of the royal houses of Israel and Judah, 1 Chronicles rekindles hope in the Davidic line. While the books of Kings stress Israel and Judah, 1 Chronicles gives us a picture of Judah's hero, David.

The books of Kings stress morality; the books of Chronicles do not ignore morality, but stress the hope of repentance. That is why 2 Chronicles 33 offers the model of the repentance of Judah's worst king, Manasseh. Some scholars see a strong grace emphasis in both 1 and 2 Chronicles. The Temple was a monument to the grace of God because the site chosen commemorated the forgiveness of David's sin in holding a census (1Ch 21:1-22:1).

The great intention of the Chronicler was to set his people's story against a backdrop that stretched from Adam, Noah and Abraham down to David. To a restored but weak nation with skeletons in its closet, 1 Chronicles brought a timeless message of hope: "There is yet a glorious future for the people of God. An abundance of blessing, strength and influence is available to them, to the extent that they truly seek their God" (J.G. McConville, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, page 13).

Outline:

Day	Text	Theme
16-21	1Ch 1-9	Standing on the Promises
22	1Ch 10:1-11:9	Bad King/Good King
23-24	1Ch 11:10-14:17	Two Steps Forward, One Step Back
25-26	1Ch 15-20	David's Winning Ways
27	1Ch 21-22	The Devil Made Him Do It
28-29	1Ch 23-27	Ordering Right Worship
30	1Ch 28-29	Passing the Baton

Family Ties

DAY 16

1 Chronicles 1:1-54

Have you ever constructed a family tree? Is anyone in your family a “chronicler” of family history?

1. Compare the Table of Nations in Genesis 11 to the record in 1 Chronicles 1. What differences do you see?
2. Why do you think Abraham’s descendants through Hagar and Keturah are listed (vs. 29-33)?
3. Is the above significant in the light of Acts 17:26-28?

1. These genealogies give the historical background needed to understand Israel’s origins. Israel’s appearance as a nation is delayed until chapter 2. Why did the Chronicler organize the information this way? (a) to set the stage, (b) to heighten the drama, (c) as a call to humility, (d) to remind the Israelites of their covenants.

2. The descendants of Esau—the Edomites—though related to Israel, were their bitter enemies. Do you recall why? See Numbers 20:14-21. Why do you think they are featured so prominently in this genealogy (1Ch 1:35-54)?

Biblical genealogies are highly selective. They are not meant to be complete or exhaustive but to show that the purposes of God move across the generations. They were probably drawn from more complete historical records or census lists. Matthew 1—the genealogy of Jesus Christ—reveals the folly of trying to do overly elaborate calculations through genealogies. In order to stress a particular point Matthew omits three kings of Judah—Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah. In the Bible, God is primarily interested in spiritual and moral teaching—salvation history.

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

Judah's Progeny

1 Chronicles 2:1-4:23

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever been accused of showing favoritism?
How did you respond?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Which tribe of Israel is discussed first (2:1-3)?
2. Which family does the text single out in some detail (vs. 4-17)? Note that David's commander Joab was his nephew (v. 16). This sheds light on David's frequent lament in the books of Samuel.
3. Can you remember where Hur and Uri were already mentioned in the Old Testament (v. 18)? What were their descendants known for (Ex 31:1-5)?
4. How did the Rechabites figure into later Bible history (Jer 35)?
5. Notice how Bathsheba is mentioned without comment (1 Ch 3:5-6). It does not seem that the Chronicler wishes to dwell on David's mistakes.

LIVING
out the Word

1. What purposes do genealogies in the Bible fulfill?
2. One of the great themes of the Bible is God's readiness to forgive imperfect human beings. Do the genealogies help make this point, even if indirectly (compare 1Ch 2:3-6 with Ge 38, for example)?

WINDOW
on the Word

***Bezaleel**, the son of Uri and grandson of Hur, is an early reminder of the principle of special gifts operating among the people of God (Ex 31:1-5). Bezaleel was a skilled craftsman in wood, metal and precious stones who also taught the people these skills (Ex 35: 30-35). In the body of Christ, teaching, wisdom and knowledge would also be cherished as special aspects of God's favor for the good of the congregation (1Co 12:8-11; Eph 4:11-13). The New Testament spiritual gifts are given to build up the church spiritually (Ro 12:5-8), just as Bezaleel and his helpers used their gifts to construct the Tabernacle physically.*

THE DYNASTY OF DAVID

The chronology of the kings of Judah is complex because of several overlapping reigns. Dates given below are approximate. There were 21 kings in the Davidic dynasty, not counting Queen Athalia, who usurped the throne for six years.

MONARCH	REIGN BEGINS	COMMENTS
David	1004 B.C.	A man "after God's own heart."
Solomon	965	Faithful at first, later fell into idolatry.
Rehoboam	928	Initially faithful, later abandoned the law and "did evil." Northern tribes of Israel rebelled.
Abijah	911	Continued in sins of his father.
Asa	908	Overall, "Did what was right in the eyes of the Lord." Removed pagan worship from Judah.
Jehoshaphat	867	"Did what was right in the eyes of the Lord," but later made an alliance with the evil Ahaziah, king of Israel.
Jehoram	846	"Did evil in the eyes of the Lord."
Ahaziah	843	"Did evil in the eyes of the Lord."
Athalia	842	The only queen to rule Judah. Promoted Baal worship; murdered royal heirs, except Joash.
Joash	836	"Did what was right in the eyes of the Lord," initially, but later restored Baal worship.
Amaziah	798	"Did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, but not wholeheartedly."
Uzziah	769	Initially "did what was right in the eyes of the Lord," but later unlawfully offered incense in the Temple.
Jotham	750	"Did what was right in the eyes of the Lord."
Ahaz	733	"Did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord."
Hezekiah	727	"Did what was right in the eyes of the Lord." Restored the worship of God, who protected Jerusalem from the Assyrians.
Manasseh	698	"Did much evil in the eyes of the Lord," but later repented in Babylonian prison. God restored his kingdom.
Amon	641	"Did evil in the eyes of the Lord."
Josiah	639	"Did what was right in the eyes of the Lord."
Jehoahaz	609	"Did evil in the eyes of the Lord." Dethroned and taken prisoner to Egypt.
Jehoiakim	608	"Did evil in the eyes of the Lord." Dethroned and taken prisoner to Babylon.
Jehoiachin	597	"Did evil in the eyes of the Lord." Dethroned and taken prisoner to Babylon. Later released.
Zedekiah	596	"Did evil in the eyes of the Lord." Taken prisoner to Babylon. Jerusalem destroyed in 586. End of the kingdom of Judah.

Judgment and Grace

1 Chronicles 4:24–5:26

OPENING
up to the Word

Was history one of your favorite subjects in school? Why or why not?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Which three tribes are next in the genealogical table (4:24–5:22)? Note the comment on Simeon in 4:33—“And they kept a genealogical record.” This footnote may explain some of the Chronicler’s sources.

2. What was distinctive about the Reubenites, Gadites and half-tribe of Manasseh (5:18)? Did they live on the east side of the Jordan in the time of Joshua (Jos 22)?

3. The passage recorded in 5:18-26 offers a thumbnail sketch of the history of Israel in the land. Even in this picture of life before the Exile, the Chronicler does not fail to record the judgment of people and tribes who turned from God. What comparison does he use to convey the magnitude of the sins of the half-tribe of Manasseh (5:25)?

4. A genealogical marker is often followed by a significant comment or footnote. Even though the Chronicler is loyal to the Davidic line, and he knew that the rest of Israel had seceded from Judah and Jerusalem, he still gave credit to people who exhibit faith and trust in God regardless of what tribe they were from. How is this illustrated in 5:18-22?

LIVING
out the Word

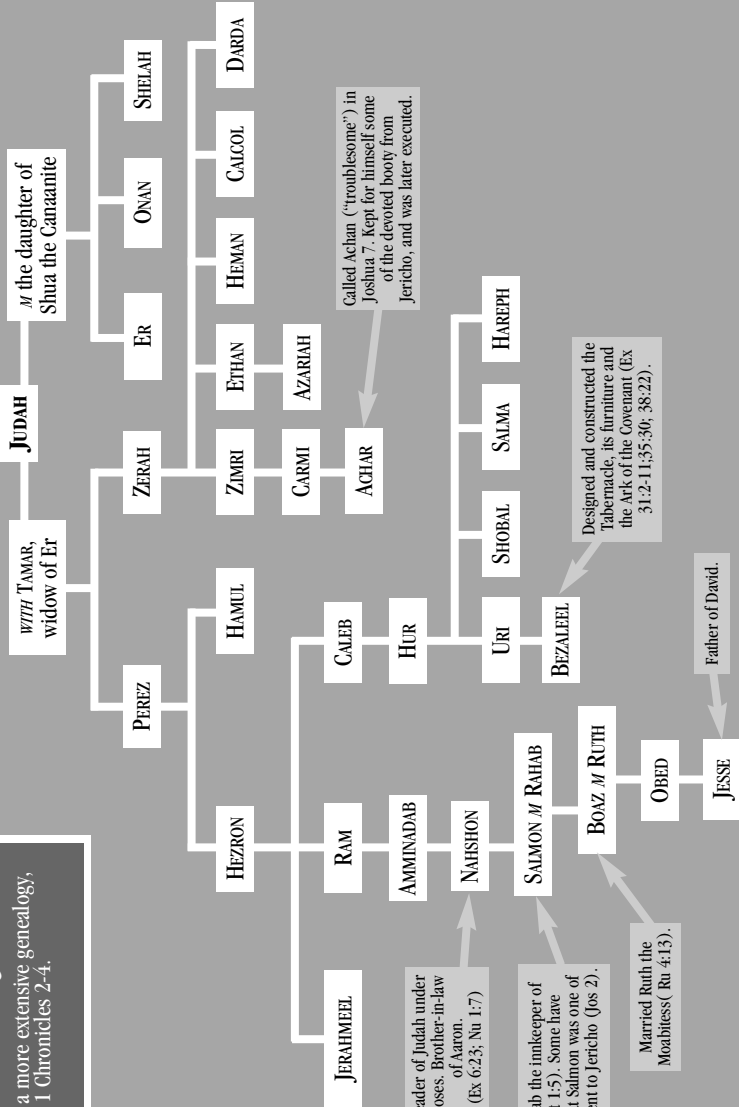
Henry Ford was supposed to have said: “History is bunk.” Evaluate that comment in light of this study.

WINDOW
on the Word

*1 Chronicles 5:6 and 26 allude to the **deporting of the northern tribes of Israel** by the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser, who reigned from 745-727 B.C. Later, the Assyrian kings Shalmaneser V (727-722 B.C.) and Sargon II (722-705 B.C.) captured the Israelite capital of Samaria and deported the remaining northern tribes in 722-721 B.C. That story is told in 2 Kings 17. The Chronicler writes with the Babylonian Captivity of Judah under Nebuchadnezzar and the fall of Jerusalem in 587-586 B.C. on his mind (6:15).*

THE FAMILY OF JUDAH

Abridged. For a more extensive genealogy, see 1 Chronicles 2-4.



Fixing an Identity

1 Chronicles 6:1–7:40

OPENING
up to the Word

Do you come from a big family or a small family?
How do you get along?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. The tribe of Levi is given an elaborate genealogy (6:1-30). Could one purpose of this genealogy be to remind the Jews that, according to the law, only the Levites could lead the nation in sacred worship (Dt 33:8-11; Ex 29:44)?

2. David links the Temple to the throne by establishing musicians to provide music in the Temple (6:31-47). The relationship between throne and Temple is a continuing theme in Chronicles.

3. Aaron and his family are accorded prominence (6:49-59) because Aaron was Israel's first high priest (Ex 28:1). Priests in Israel were often considered "sons of Aaron." Why would this emphasis have been important for Jews returning from captivity?

4. The tribes of Issachar and Benjamin have sometimes been called the "military tribes" because of the attention given to their fighting men before the captivities (7:1-12). Now, with far fewer numbers, who would the returning Jews need to depend on for their defense?

LIVING
out the Word

1. In the 20th century the problem of "identity" ("Who am I?") loomed large in the writings of philosophers and thinkers. Do these chapters exemplify a measure of stability and security amidst the passing parade of history?

2. If you had to write only two or three brief sentences about your life as a Christian, what would you say?

Skeletons in the Closet?

DAY 20

1 Chronicles 8:1-40

Every family has its secrets and embarrassing incidents. What are some of yours?

1. The family of Benjamin is given more space than any tribe except Judah and Levi (vs. 1-40). How was Benjamin important in the history of the Israelite kings?

2. Note how Saul, Israel's first king, is passed over without comment in verse 33, as is Jonathan, David's devoted friend (vs. 33-34). Why do you think this was done?

1. We live in a "celebrity culture" where the mass media bombards us with famous personalities who shoot briefly through our lives like meteors. Yet the Chronicler takes a different approach—both faithful Samuel (6:28) and faithless Saul are given the same treatment.

2. Given the apostle Paul's commentary on his own life in Ephesians 3:8, is there not a subtle spiritual point being made by these comprehensive listings of the good, the bad and the ugly in Israel? What do you think it might be?

*One not-so-minor character left out of Saul's family is David's first wife, the daughter of Saul, **Michal** (1Sa 18:20-27). When David fled from Saul, she was given to another (1Sa 25:44). After Saul's death, David demanded her restitution as a political move to strengthen his claim to the throne (2Sa 3:13-16). This may help shed light on her bitterness toward David recorded in 2 Samuel.*

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Starting Over

1 Chronicles 9:1-24

OPENING
up to the Word

Is there a place or period in history that has special meaning to you? Would you want to go there for a visit?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Why were the people of Judah taken captive to Babylon (v. 1)?
2. Who were the first people to return from captivity and begin resettlement (v. 2)?
3. Why do you suppose the genealogy of King Saul is repeated (vs. 39-44)? Hint: the theme of the successes of David occupies nearly the next 20 chapters. This is a sharp contrast to the failures of Saul.

LIVING
out the Word

In 1 Timothy 1:4 Paul warns against obsession with “myths and endless genealogies.” Do you think he could have had 1 Chronicles 1-9 in mind?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Ezra 2:59-63 gives important background. It shows that after the captivity and restoration there were a number of returning **priests** who could not establish their right to serve by presenting family records. This suggests a reason for the Chronicler's concern with genealogy (1Ch 9:3-34). The list given in this chapter refers to serving priests who were alive during the restoration. The text thus jumps ahead from the time of David to the restoration, almost 500 years. This is done to help establish the legitimacy of the work of Ezra, Nehemiah and other leaders in the post-exilic Jewish community. Books such as Ezra, Nehemiah, Malachi, Haggai, Zechariah and Psalms (see Psalm 126) can be described as **literature of the return**. For the exiles from Babylon there was the glorious opportunity to start over again in the land of Israel. The literature of this period—of which Chronicles is part—details the obstacles in the way of rebuilding the Temple and the true worship of God. Many scholars conclude that **Paul's warnings against genealogies** apply not to scriptural genealogies, but to early heretics or people attempting to inflate their importance in the congregation.*

*“Now the first to resettle
on their own property in
their own towns were some
Israelites, priests, Levites
and temple servants.”*

1 Chronicles 9:2

